



Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment

CARPE II

TECHNICAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The total grant amounting to \$1,101,420.06 has enabled WWF-US to focus on key Biodiversity conservation activities within its three main projects in the subregion:

1. The Dzanga-Sangha Integrated Conservation and Development Project, in Central African Republic (CAR)
2. The Gamba Protected Areas Complex, in the Republic of Gabon, and
3. The Minkebe Project in Gabon as well.

It should be mentioned that among the four CARPE themes (Biodiversity Conservation, Community Based Natural Resource Management, Project Coordination and Studies) and according to each theme's expected results, some of WWF activities are cross-cutting activities. The bushmeat control activity for example is a major issue in Dzanga-Sangha and Gamba Complex Projects whereas the development of a cadre of future forest resource management and biodiversity conservation leaders in the Congo Basin is of great necessity for the three above cited projects. Others activities under the following themes CNRM (Community Participatory Mapping), Project Coordination from WWF-US Headquarters, and even Biodiversity Conservation (law enforcement and Kongana Regional Training Center supports, Environmental Awareness) are respectively specific to Minkebe, WWF Headquarters and Dzanga-Sangha.

This reporting period will be enlightened by the major accomplishments and lessons learned under each theme. This report will be presented according to the four CARPE themes:

1. Biodiversity Conservation
2. Community Natural Resource Management
3. Project Coordination
4. Studies

THEME 1: BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

1. DZANGA-SANGHA AND GAMBA BUSHMEAT CONTROL

Expected Result:

“Comparative evaluation of the conservation payoffs and economic cost of curbing bushmeat hunting within logging concessions and within protected areas.”

1.1. DZANGA-SANGHA BUSHMEAT CONTROL

Objective:

Work closely with the “Société de Bois de Bayanga” to establish and monitor controls on bushmeat hunting, trade and transport in the logging concession. This activity corresponds to the second output of the project as mentioned above.

Progress:

A feedback from the field expert about the title of this project activity is that instead of Dzanga-Sangha Bushmeat Control, it should be read “Dzanga-Sangha Commercial Exploitation Control” which encompasses both logging and safari hunting sectors.

Technical collaboration has begun with the Reserve’s main logging company, Société des Bois de Bayanga (SBB). A team composed of Dzanga-Sangha Project (DSP) and SBB field staff worked together to delineate the border between the eastern limit of SBB’s concession and the community hunting zone (part of the Reserve).

According to the legal text governing the management of the Reserve and the National Park, project personnel are to work conjointly with the provincial representative of the Forestry Division on monitoring and controlling all logging activities in the Reserve. A tentative agreement was reached at the end of March 2001 between project and the local Forestry Division representative to begin collaborative controls of SBB in April 2001 (a portion of this work is to be supported under the auspices of CARPE II).

In June 2001 the terms of reference was completed for the liaison position between SBB and Dzanga-Sangha. This month, in July, announcement for candidates was made in newspapers, on the radio with interviews and the selection process to be completed by July 31, 2001, hoping that by August or September the new person will begin his or her work and be based in Bayanga.

However, it should be pointed out that if civil unrest continues to prevail in Bangui then there will be delays in implementing several activities, particularly in regards to Kongana and the recruitment of the new staff member for the “Commercial Exploitation Control” activity.

The DSP project has helped the local hunters organized themselves into a Hunter’s working group (Project output 3) in order to successfully and efficiently control the wildlife hunting, trade and transportation, and to ensure a sustainable and participatory natural resource management in the project zone. This Hunter’s Working Group, composed

of representatives of the project, local communities, and local administrations, conducted its fifth meeting in December 2000. Participants worked together to develop a preliminary strategy for reducing the negative impact of illegal hunting by individuals leaving outside the Reserve (in CAR as well as from neighboring Cameroon and Congo). During this reporting period, in collaboration with concerned villages, the Conservation Department has selected the location for a secondary guard post in the northeast reaches of the Reserve, the site of illegal diamond mining and incursions from large towns bordering the protected area.

1.1. 2. SUPPORT TO THE LAW ENFORCEMENT UNIT OF DZANGA- SANGHA PARKS.

Expected Results:

“Test the assumption that level of threat is related to costs of management -- 2 site analysis of actual recurring cost spending from all sources in relation to park size, market access, population density, threats, changes in large mammal populations, index of poaching pressure.”

Objective:

Provide support of on-going management cost of Dzanga-Sangha Law enforcement unit.

Progress:

Through this law enforcement support, the project has expanded and improved its system of surveillance. Remedial measures were taken in the second quarter of last year to correct what was perceived as a Conservation Department characterized by weak or inexperienced leadership resulting in inefficient planning and anti-poaching patrol deployment as well as an undisciplined paramilitary wildlife guard force. A quarterly planning system has been instituted with the first quarter of this year (January – March 2001), focusing on the development and implementation of strategies to remotivate the existing guard force, increasing wildlife guard presence in the field.

In April 2001, 13 new wildlife guards and 3 BaAka pygmy trackers completed their training and began working for the conservation unit in May 2001. Their salaries and benefits as well as those of the Conservation Technical Advisor's will be covered under CARPE II.

a) Personnel/Structure

A new National Director was nominated in November 2000 and assumed his post in February 2001. The project continues to maintain a support staff including an administrator (GTZ-funded), accountant, secretary, nurse, and numerous garage personnel and property guards. CARPE money has contributed to the administrative functioning of the project including personnel, communications, maintenance, and supplies.

At present the Conservation Department is composed of:

- 1 Technical Advisor (WWF with CARPE support)
- 1 Warden
- 1 Assistant Warden
- 4 Brigade (or squad) Leaders
- 35 Wildlife Guards
- 2 Wildlife Guards on leave of absence at professional college
- 4 BaAka Trackers

To compensate for the loss of five wildlife guards due to elephant-poaching related charges as well as to increase the impact and extent of anti-poaching activities, guard numbers will be increased by the end of year 2001.

b) Anti-poaching Activities

During this six-month period, the following anti-poaching missions were organized:

- Forest patrols: 65
- River patrols (national and trinational): 12
- Mobile patrols and “ambushes”: 12

as well as a permanent presence at a barrier on the only road leading out of the reserve (in a northerly direction).

The results of these different anti-poaching activities led to the confiscation of:

- 1850 wire cable snares as well as 3 uncut rolls of cables
- 517 kilograms of illegal bushmeat (elephant meat representing approximately 30%)
- 5 ivory tusks
- 703 bullets or cartridges including 598 bullets of 7.62 mm, and 42 of 7.5 mm
- 4 rifles/shotguns

c) Ecological Monitor

After three years of data collection on fixed line transects, the ecological monitoring program is being revamped. Data collection on fixed line transects will continue on a quarterly versus monthly basis. During “non-transect” months, surveys or reconnaissance walks will be conducted in less frequented portions of the Reserve. The information collected will provide a more global view of the status of wildlife in the Park and Reserve as well as identifying zones of concentrated human presence and poaching. However, existing personnel do not have the capacity to analyze data. At present two solutions are being contemplated: hiring a person with an education level sufficient to learn data analysis or sending the data to an expert for annual analysis.

d) Road maintenance

The dry season permitted the Conservation Department to organize the clearing of 76.5 kilometers of road, crucial for efficient and effective wildlife guard deployment as well as, in the future, expanded tourism activities.

It should be mentioned that in the last six months, CARPE funding has facilitated the purchase of a wealth of equipment including: chainsaws, dugout boats permitting increased river patrolling, a computer, a new Satellite telephone as well as field equipment for guards and the ecological monitoring team (GPS units, trail/tree marking equipment, life vests, high beam lights for night patrolling on the river, etc.) With complementary support from the WWF family, two new 4X4 pick-ups have been ordered to replace the increasingly costly (repairs and maintenance) existing vehicles for the Conservation Department.

e) Sangha River Trinational (SRT) Developments

The Sangha River Trinational initiative (SRT) continues to evolve at a rapid rate with the culminating event at the end of 2000 being the signing of a Cooperative Agreement by the Environment Ministers of the three concerned countries.

Under the auspices of the SRT, a workshop for wildlife guards was organized in the use of the Cyber-tracker technology (combining GPS units with palm pilots) as a means of facilitating data collection in the field, particularly on anti-poaching missions. The cost of equipment and training was funded through support from the African Elephant Conservation Fund/WWF-International. Lastly, representatives of the DSP and NNNP completed a draft document on transborder collaboration vis-a-vis the SRT that will be included in a future BSP (Biodiversity Support Program) publication.

1.1.3. SUPPORT TO KONGAN REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER

Expected Results:

“ Protected Area managers with community relation skills, and able to develop landscape management and law enforcement plans”

Objective:

Provide curriculum support to the Kongana Regional Training Center.

Progress:

Equipment has been purchased for the training of the new guards. The training itself was financed by a different funding source.

The next training is likely to be in-house “refresher courses” training for the existing guards as well as planned training-of-trainers, which are both to be funded through CARPE II money.

The Minkebe Project (WWF) in Gabon had expressed interest in the organization of a paramilitary-focused training for their guards in 2001 at Kongana Training Center. The center’s training program will be presented to Minkebe for finalization and implementation.

1. 2. GAMBIA BUSHMEAT CONTROL

Objective:

Compile lessons learned on controlling bushmeat and environmental degradation with Oil Company in Gambia Complex.

Progress:

This project component started on March 15, 2001. A consultant has been hired to carry out the activities. Results will be placed on the project's web site called "Moukalaba-Loango national Park."

This project will be carried out in collaboration with Shell Environmental Sector in order to put pressure on Perenco and Elf Oil companies who do not follow international guidelines in term of legislation imposing management plan and impact studies.

We should also mention that the Wildlife Inventory Team leaders, a statistic consultant and the World Conservation Society Researcher, Mr. Lee White analyzed the result of the inventory data carried out lately. These data will be integrated into the complex's Geographic Information System (GIS) and will be used for the zoning plan.

The community natural resource management system studies continued during this present semester. These activities aim the bushmeat trade and the unloading of fish in Gambia as well as the climbing of the sea turtle on the beach between Gambia and Nyanga.

A consumption survey was initiated within four villages of the complex: two villages along the Ndongo lagoon, within the department of Ndougou and two villages in the department of Douigny. Results from this study will allow the project to have an overview of the proportion of natural resources utilized for human and economic consumption among the ethnic groups of Bapunu et Balumbu-Bavili from complex. The local populations living in the Protected area need these resources to ensure their survival, and there has been any data up to date that could allow the assessment of their dependence on these natural resources. Therefore this survey, Sponsored by The MacArthur Foundation, is crucial to the project because it will give a clear idea on the nutritional status of the local populations. The data from this project will be used to establish a sustainable natural resource management system in the long term. On the other hand, knowing the quantity of resources taken out by local communities will allow the Gambia Complex project managers to assess the resources exploitation status by calculating the sustainable yields of the different species compared to the real data.

In addition the project could compare these data with the legislation text, verifying that the legislation is compatible with the real local populations' natural resource utilization. The food consumption report will be out pretty soon.

1.2.1 GAMBA ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Result:

Progressive development of a cadre of future forest resource management and biodiversity conservation leaders.

Objective:

Provide support to local NGO in the Gamba Complex to carry out Environmental Awareness Programs.

Progress:

The local NGO Ibonga continues raising the awareness of the local populations on conservation issues and educating the Gamba Youth on ways forward for a sustainable natural resource management and environmental protection.

The project has learned that it is very crucial to empower the local regroupings or associations to take lead on improving their living standard. They know better their peers' mentality and behavior.

Peace Corps Gabon has assigned a Volunteer to work with the project carrying out Environmental Education activities together with Ibonga.

One of the village collaborators attended a three-week training on Environmental Education Techniques organized by IUCN Waza Logone project in Cameroon.

In order to raise the awareness of the Gamba Complex stakeholders on the potential on their environment and the wealth of their biodiversity, The project Technical Advisor organized a field trip to the Campfire Project in Zimbabwe last May. This study tour allowed the Mayor of Gamba, the General Secretary of Ndougou department and the Ministry of Water and Forest's Wildlife Management Officer to see a model of a sustainable community natural resource project. They were exposed to opportunities that sustainable natural resource management offers as a funding source for conservation and development activities. They were delighted and amazed by the CAMPFIRE program.

1.3. CONGO BASIN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Result:

Progressive development of a cadre of future forest resource management and biodiversity conservation leaders.

Objective:

Provide on site, on the job mentoring for 5 senior level conservation counterparts (2 in Dzanga-Sangha, 2 in Minkebe and 1 in Gamba) in protected area management and biodiversity conservation.

Progress:

The original idea behind this component of CARPE II was that project managers choose among their staff one or two persons that could be trained through the WWF College to take the lead on biodiversity conservation. Unfortunately, the language is becoming the biggest constraints to this dream. Since the WWF College courses are taught in English. However, each project has been providing opportunities for their staff to enlarge their horizon on the subject through local seminars, workshops, and short courses on co-management and participatory mapping as a natural resource management tool.

In the Complex of Gamba for example, two village collaborators attended a co-management workshop organized by IUCN, in Cameroon. Whereas in Dzanga-Sangha, computer equipment has been purchased for the two senior members of the conservation unit. Due to time limitation of the Project Technical Advisor no training programs have been identified yet. The commencement of this search is planned for the end of July 2001.

THEME II: COMMUNITY NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**I. MINKEBE-DJA COMMUNITY PARTICIPATORY MAPPING:****Expected Results:**

Assessment of the long-term impact of participatory mapping exercise as a tool for enhancing community capacity to negotiate greater control over forest resources, and for mobilizing community interest in resource conservation.

Main Objective:

Test Community Participatory mapping in two villages in Cameroon north of Minkebe Reserve in the Minkebe-Dja corridor.

This main objective is divided into two sub-objectives:

Objective 1.

Work toward collaborative river-management using participatory mapping exercise with Mvadhi-Mayibouth communities in the Upper-Invindo.

This objective is linked to the management of Minkebe reserve and its periphery and increased understanding of river-use in the transborder area in particular Djoua and Katangoua rivers.

Progress:

The major tasks under this objective were to liaise with the Innovative Resource Management in Upper Ivindo area. Once partners are ready start the first Participatory mapping exercise in Mvadh-Mahibout villages and produce first results.

Objective 2.

In collaboration with the MINEF Cameroon, WWF-Cameroon Program Office, ECOFAC-Dja, the Minkebe project will carry out socio-economic surveys in Mintm-Lele-Mbala-Ngoila-Zoulabot II. This will contribute to fulfill the data gaps in order to develop a full GEF proposal for transborder conservation in Minkebe-Dja-Odzala interzone.

Progress:

The project manager think that for the moment it is too early to collaborate with IRM on this theme because participatory mapping is maybe not the right methodology to start with in a zone where conservation activity and project-driven or project-accompanied resource management is absent. Also land-use issues in the zone are relatively tense and related to possible income from logging in community forests. It is planned, in the development of the full transborder project proposal for GEF, that a socio-economic survey team will visit the corridor zone probable in the September - December 2001 period. However, this team will have a very specific methodology, which will focus on feasibility of Protected area and/or corridor establishment. The main conservation problems (Elephant poaching, heavy bushmeat trade, illegal settlements which take the nature of a village) and most urgent tasks ahead for a conservation project in South Cameroon and the transborder zone. It will be after this mission that it can be evaluated if PM mapping methodology can be applied in this zone.

II. GAMBA SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Result:

Evaluation of the costs, opportunities and challenges to using community resource management contracts as a tool for incorporating communities in forest resource management.

Objective:

Assess lessons learned at the Gamba Protected Area Complex to identify community options for intervention points in sustainable natural resource management.

Progress:

Since September 10, 2000, the Gamba Protected Area Complex has a new Technical Advisor, Mr. Jean Bourgeais who replaced Mr. Marc Thibault whose contract ended at the same period of the time. He brought to the project his 20 years of experience in development project management, especially his 5 year management experience of the Lekedi Park in Haut Ogooué.

With his ambition to see the local populations protect their environment and conserve their invaluable wealth of inheritance, Jean took another approach to biodiversity conservation, developing micro-entreprises such CECOTOUR, organizing people into Associations.

He brought all the WWF agents and Brigade officers from the Ministry of Water and Forest together in a meeting on February 26, 2001. The objectives of the meeting were

- a) to improve coordination among the three wildlife squads based in Sette-Cama, Iguela, and Moukalaba
- b) to assess progress made so far and identify major issues or obstacle hindering their performance
- c) to develop a work plan for the year related to the Complex's management plan.

This meeting has allowed the participants to get acquainted with the project goal and management plan and all prevention measures and monitoring activities, assess the budget necessary for the functioning of the project. Most importantly are the strategies and planning that they came up with together. They also seize the opportunity to assess the needs related to environmental education, awareness raising and information dissemination.

A series of meetings were held with the different stakeholders, local village chiefs, and local administrative authorities (Mayors, Governors, Sous-Préfet, etc.). With the consent and in collaboration with the population of the complex, WWF-Gamba has developed a legal structure – called “CECOTOUR” to promote tourism within the main villages of the Complex: Moukalaba, Iguela and Sette-Cama. Jean Bourgeois believes that this is the first “open window” to bring people's attention to conservation initiatives.

CECOTOUR is an association that should bring together all the strengths, forces and the know-how to implement lucrative activities, sustainable income generating activities for all people who would rent their services to the nature fond visitors.

On June 2, 2001, the first and big environmental event took place in Gamba. The Ibonga Youth Association under WWF auspices organized this event. This was in prelude of the June 5 Environment Day. The project and its partners chose June 2 to draw the attention and allow the participation of a lot of people.

The event started with kids' parade early in the day, with kids dressed up in homemade costume with masks. This parade was followed by canoe race and different games.

It was a successful event and people are still talking about it all over the country.

THEME: PROJECT COORDINATION

Result:

Enhanced collaboration with CARPE and partners activities, synthesis dissemination of WWF/CARPE results.

Objective:

Provide support for field activities, CARPE Meetings, Travel for collaboration among field projects; dedicate half time of WWF position to CARPE Coordination, communication, and synthesis.

Progress:

During the first phase of the CARPE Program, BSP, in collaboration with WWF, staffed and operated a CARPE Regional Field Office in Gabon, Focal Point offices in Cameroon and DRC, in order to provide field-level representation for the CARPE program.

To increase CARPE's impact in the Central African region and to prepare for BSP closure in December 2001, WWF proposed to place the regional facilitation within its structure, for support of communication and coordination of CARPE Partner activities. The Regional Facilitator will operate at WWF-CARPO in Libreville Gabon. WWF- CARPO is in line with the CARPE Advisors recommendation to gradually transfer CARPE from the US to the region, and would improve communication amongst CARPE partners working in the field.

Nicodeme Tchamou, the CARPE Focal Point in Cameroon, has been selected by the panel and recruited by WWF as the Regional facilitator. Being in the field himself and specially part of CARPE Program, Nicodeme will serve better in this position, bringing in all his knowledge of the region to carry forward CARPE activities in the region.

THEME: STUDIES

1. Survey Team Training:

Result:

Assessment of the consequences of civil unrest on the conservation status and level of resource exploitation in previously intact, protected and non-protected, large blocks of forest.

Objective:

Train and support rapid survey team to survey biodiversity and conservation status of selected forest zones in areas of unrest.

Progress:

This component of the project is still pending for recruitment of potential candidates.

The fields project managers would like this training to be a hands-on training rather than a classroom setting one. Once candidates are chosen among the project staff and local NGO members, the project will proceed with the training.

Recent political development and insecurity in Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic has also hindered the starting of this project component.

CONCLUSION

CARPE II funding support has allowed Dzanga-Sangha Project to increase the number of its Guards in order to cover the entire project zone and purchased appropriate equipment for them.

In Gamba, the project has put more emphasis on eco-tourism that could allow the local population to earn some income through income generating activities. The world environmental day celebrated every June 5 of each year was an opportunity for the Gamba Protected Area managers to draw the attention of the Gabonese on the why to protect their invaluable wealth inheritance.

It was decided that the socioeconomic survey would be a priority and to postpone the collaboration with IRM for the implementation of the Minkebe-Dja Transborder mapping exercise until 2002. Following is the plan for next year.

FY 2002: Between September - December 2001: Start the socio-economic survey in the Mintom-Lele-Mbalam-Ngoila-Zoulabot II area to collect data needed for the development of the full GEF transborder project. Team members for the socio-economic survey will be drawn in priority from ECOFAC-Dja, WWF-Southeast project, MINEF-Cameroon, and (maybe) WWF-Minkebe Project. The results of this mission will orientate further work regarding the Minkebe Dja Nki Forest and evaluate the appropriateness to use Participatory-mapping methodology for certain villages in this sector.

FY 2002: At least one field mission executed, first results produced, and plan for extension of the work agreed.

FY 2003: Final maps and results produced.

Regarding the Biodiversity Conservation Leadership development, project managers are doing all their best to overcome the English language barrier by providing training to their respective staff wherever it is possible in the region. The Dzanga-Sangha Project administration has purchased a computers for its two senior staff and will begin the training by the end of this year or sometime early next year.

CARPE has finally achieved one of its main goal, passing on the baton to Africans. What a giant step! Nicodeme Tchamou former CARP Cameroon Focal Point is taking over the Regional Facilitator's position and will be based in WWF-CARPO office in Libreville, Gabon.